

## Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 MCT-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 DEAE-00 IO-13 JUSE-00 SNM-02 TRSE-00 OES-06

OMB-01 COME-00 EB-07 LAB-04 SIL-01 DHA-02 AID-05 /099 W  
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P R 082020Z OCT 76

FM AMEMBASSY LIMA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2189

INFO AMEMBASSY LA PAZ

AMEMBASSY QUITO

AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

C O N F I D E N T I A L LIMA 9278

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PINS, SNAR, SHUM, PE

SUBJ: GOP REVEALS EXISTENCE OF TERRORIST PLOT

REF: LIMA 7879

SUMMARY: THE GOP HAS REVEALED THE EXISTENCE OF A FAR-LEFT  
TERRORIST ORGANIZATION, THE EJERCITO POPULAR PERUANO (EPP),  
WHICH ALLEGEDLY WAS PREPARING LARGE-SCALE URBAN AND RURAL  
GUERRILLA OPERATIONS TO INCLUDE KIDNAPINGS, POSSIBLE ASSASSINATIONS  
AND ATTACKS ON GOVERNMENT INSTALLATIONS. THE GOP CLAIMED THAT  
THE GROUP FINANCED OPERATION THROUGH BANK ROBBERIES, AUTO THEFTS,  
AND COCAINE TRAFFICKING. THE GOP ALSO CHARGED A CONNECTION  
BETWEEN THE EPP AND A FEW DISSIDENT ARMY OFFICERS (TWO OF WHOM  
ARE NOW IN THE VENEZUELAN EMBASSY). THE GOP USED REVELATION  
AT THIS TIME TO DEFEND THE STATE OF EMERGENCY AND SUSPENSION OF  
GUARANTEES WHICH, ACCORDING TO INTERIOR MINISTER CISNEROS,  
SHOULD CONTINUE UNTIL ALL SUBVERSIVE CELLS ARE ERADICATED. AN  
UNSTATED FACTOR IN THE GOP DECISION TO MAINTAIN THE STATE OF  
EMERGENCY MUST BE FEAR OF WIDE-SCALE LABOR UNREST AND  
POSSIBLE POPULAR PROTEST AGAINST AUSTERITY MEASURES SHOULD  
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PERSONAL GUARANTEES BE RESTORED. END SUMMARY.

1. INTERIOR MINISTER CISNEROS CALLED A PRESS CONFERENCE TO EVENING OF OCTOBER 6 AND ANNOUNCED THAT THE GOP HAD DISCOVERED THE EXISTENCE OF A TERRORIST ORGANIZATION, THE EJERCITO POPULAR PERUANO (EPP), WHICH WAS PREPARING TO INITIATE URBAN GUERRILLA ACTIVITY IN HOPES OF "DESTABILIZING" THE GOP. CISNEROS STATED THAT THE FAR-LEFT GROUP HAS BEEN OPERATING IN PERU SINCE 1974. ACCORDING TO CISNEROS, THE GOVERNMENT FIRST DISCOVERED ITS EXISTENCE IN MARCH 1976 AS A CONSEQUENCE OF AN ARMED ENCOUNTER AT SAN MARCOS UNIVERSITY BETWEEN THE FAR-LEFT GROUPS VANGUARDIA REVOLUCIONARIA AND PATRIA ROJA. A POLICE INVESTIGATION AT THAT TIME LED TO THE ARREST OF 12 PERSONS ALLEGEDLY ASSOCIATED WITH THE EPP. CISNEROS DECLARED THAT THE POLICE ALSO UNCOVERED A CACHE OF AUTOMATIC WEAPONS, EXPLOSIVES AND COCAINE PASTE, THE SALE OF WHICH PRESUMABLY HELPED FINANCE THE TERRORIST ORGANIZATION (SEE LIMA 7879 FOR FURTHER DISCUSSION OF THE DRUG CONNECTION WITH THIS TERRORIST GROUP). IN SEPTEMBER POLICE INVESTIGATIONS RESULTED IN THE ARREST OF FIVE OTHER EPP ACTIVISTS AND THE DISCOVERY OF MORE ARMS, EXPLOSIVES AND DRUGS. CISNEROS SAID THAT THE INVESTIGATION CONTINUES.

2. CISNEROS DESCRIBED MEMBERS OF THE EPP AS "RADICAL, DISSIDENT MARXIST-LENINISTS", SOME OF WHOM ARE LINKED TO THE 1965 GUERRILLA MOVEMENT. ONE COMMANDO LEADER IS A FOREIGNER (EMBASSY HAS BEEN TOLD A FRENCH WOMAN WAS INVOLVED). ALLEGED EPP ACTIVITIES INCLUDED ARMS PURCHASES AND PREPARATIONS FOR VAST SUBVERSIVE GUERRILLA OPERATIONS IN BOTH URBAN AND RURAL AREAS. CISNEROS CLAIMED THAT THE EPP HAD DRAWN UP A LIST OF PERSONS PROMINENT IN GOVERNMENT, INDUSTRY AND SOCIETY, MARKED FOR KIDNAPING OR DEATH. IT HAD ALREADY CARRIED OUT 3 KIDNAPINGS, THE VICTIMS OF WHICH WERE RELEASED UNHARMED AND WITH DEMANDS UNMET (ONE OF THOSE ALLEGEDLY KIDNAPED EARLIER IN THE YEAR WAS PROMINENT JOURNALIST ISMAEL FRIAS WHO TOLD FRIENDS THAT HE TALKED HIS WAY OUT OF THE SITUATION). CISNEROS OPINED THAT KIDNAPINGS MAY HAVE BEEN A TRAINING EXERCISE. PROSPECTIVE TERRORIST TARGETS WERE SAID TO INCLUDE THE MINISTRY OF INTERIOR AND PESCA-PERU OFFICES. THE EPP WAS ALSO SAID TO BE PLANNING TO BLOW UP THE MONUMENT OF FRANCISCO PIZARRO IN LIMA'S PLAZA DE ARMAS. PERHAPS OF GREATEST CONCERN TO THE GOP WAS AN ALLEGED ATTEMPT BY THE EPP TO INFILTRATE THE ARMY.

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CISNEROS CLAIMED THAT THE GROUP WAS IN CONTACT WITH A FEW MID-LEVEL ARMY OFFICERS WHO COLLABORATED IN TERRORIST PLANS.

3. CISNEROS ADDRESSED THE HUMAN RIGHTS QUESTION IN THE GOP ROUND-UP OF SUBVERSIVES. HE STATED THAT "THERE IS REPRESSION BUT IT IS SELECTIVE". HE THEN NOTED THAT INCLUDING THE 17 TERRORISTS, A TOTAL OF 143 PERSONS ARE NOW UNDER DETENTION FOR SUBVERSIVE POLITICAL ACTIVITIES (THIS TOTAL WOULD PRE-

SUMABLY INCLUDE THE 54 ENGINEERING UNIVERSITY STUDENTS AS WELL AS LABOR LEADERS, FROM MINE, TEACHER, METAL, AND FISHERMEN'S UNIONS). CISNEROS CLAIMED THAT A TOTAL OF 143 POLITICAL PRISONERS IN A POPULATION OF 16 MILLION CANNOT BE TERMED REPRESSION. "LEFTISTS SAY THAT THERE IS MASSACRE AND MASS ARREST; IT IS NOT TRUE. THE GOVERNMENT ONLY ARRESTS THOSE INVOLVED IN SUBVERSIVE ACTS." THE INTERIOR MINISTER ALSO RELATED THE REOPENING OF PERIODICALS TO THE EPP MATTER, STATING THAT THE GOP WOULD TAKE INTO ACCOUNT THE POLITICAL AFFILIATION OF THESE MAGAZINES AND JOURNALS BEFORE PERMITTING THEIR PUBLICATION.

4. CISNEROS ACCOMPANIED THE LENGTHY DESCRIPTION OF ALLEGED SUBVERSIVE ACTIVITY WITH A VIGOROUS DEFENSE OF THE STATE OF EMERGENCY. CISNEROS DECLARED THAT THE CITIZENRY WOULD NOW UNDERSTAND WHY THE STATE OF EMERGENCY MUST BE MAINTAINED, AND THAT HE WOULD RECOMMEND CONTINUED SUSPENSION OF GUARANTEES UNTIL ALL SUBVERSIVE CELLS THROUGHOUT PERU ARE DESTROYED. "TO TERMINATE THESE (SECURITY MEASURES) WOULD BE TO BREAK THE DIKE...."

5. COMMENT: THE EXISTENCE OF A SUBVERSIVE GROUP CALLING ITSELF THE EPP HAS BEEN KNOWN FOR SOME TIME. PART OF THE RECENT GOP INTEREST IN AN EXPANDED NARCOTICS PROGRAM APPARENTLY STEMS FROM A GOP CONVICTION THAT DRUG TRAFFICK HELPS FINANCE TERRORIST GROUPS. THE GOVERNMENT APPARENTLY CHOSE THIS MOMENT TO MAKE A PUBLIC REVELATION AND TO TIE THE EPP TO ALMOST ALL RECENT INCIDENTS FROM BANK ROBBERIES TO DISSIDENCE AMONG MID-LEVEL ARMY OFFICERS IN ORDER TO JUSTIFY AN OPEN-ENDED STATE OF EMERGENCY WHICH IT HAS APPARENTLY CONCLUDED IS NECESSARY. THE UNMENTIONED GOP FEAR IN THE EVENT CONSTITUTIONAL GUARANTEES ARE RESTORED IS ANTICIPATED LARGE-SCALE LABOR UNREST AND POSSIBLE POPULAR PROTEST. WORKERS ARE ONLY NOW FEELING THE BITTER EFFECT OF ECONOMIC AUSTERITY MEASURES AND DISCONTENT IS WIDE-SPREAD IF STILL UNFOCUSED.

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6. THE GOP MAY STILL BE CONCERNED ABOUT DISSENSION WITHIN THE MILITARY. A FONOFF SOURCE TOLD EMBASSY THAT MILITANT LEFTIST ARMY OFFICERS MAJOR FERNANDEZ SALVATECCI (NEPHEW OF FORMER PRIME MINISTER FERNANDEZ MALDONADO) AND A CAPT. ELOY VILLACREZ WHO WERE JAILED IN JULY AND THEN DISCHARGED FROM THE ARMY, HAVE NOW SOUGHT ASYLUM IN THE VENEZUELAN EMBASSY.

7. THE DRAMATIC REVELATION OF THIS TERRORIST GROUP'S EXISTENCE, USED AS A DEFENSE FOR CONTINUING THE STATE OF EMERGENCY, MAY ALSO INDICATE GOP SENSITIVITY TO INTERNATIONAL PUBLIC OPINION AND RECENT INTEREST IN PERU'S HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION.  
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## Message Attributes

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